

<b>REPORT REFERENCE NO.</b>	<b>CSCPC/20/2</b>
<b>MEETING</b>	<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORPORATE PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>16 JULY 2020</b>
<b>SUBJECT OF REPORT</b>	<b>GRENFELL RECOMMENDATIONS PROGRESS REPORT</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF SERVICE DELIVERY</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<p><i>(a). that the Committee reviews at future meetings the assurance process for the Grenfell recommendations and the Home Office returns for the Building Risk Review Grant funding; and</i></p> <p><i>(b). that, subject to (a) above, the report be noted.</i></p>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	This paper outlines progress with Service implementation of the recommendations from the Grenfell phase 1 inquiry and the additional Building Risk Review Grant funding.
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	The Service will receive a total grant of £316,909.34
<b>EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS (ERBA)</b>	Not applicable to this report.
<b>APPENDICES</b>	None
<b>LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	None

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. The tragic events that unfolded in Grenfell tower are a stark reminder of how complexity and a combination of circumstances can contribute to a terrible outcome.
- 1.2. The purpose of this briefing note is to give assurance to the Committee that the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (“the Service”) has the appropriate governance in place to address shortfalls that have been identified in the Grenfell Phase1 report, as well as taking a proactive approach so that we are in a position to adapt and wherever possible actively contribute towards potential changes in legislation and national best practice.
- 1.3. The National Fire Chiefs’ Council (NFCC) has issued guidance and asked that any solutions be taken forward collectively to ensure a sector-wide response that avoids either duplication or conflict in approach whilst acknowledging that fire and rescue services will want to assure themselves that they have addressed any risk critical areas. In support of this approach, the Service has officers seconded to the NFCC and involved in national working groups.

## **2. SUMMARY OF SOME OF THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE SPREAD OF FIRE AND IMPACT AT GRENFELL**

- 2.1. Failures in the regulatory systems governing building regulations and fire safety in high-rise buildings (but also the wider built environment) leading to:
  - The use of combustible materials on the outside of high-rise buildings in breach of building regulations
  - Failure in compartmentation
  - Failure of equipment provided for the purposes of firefighting
- 2.2. Failures in the planning and preparation of London Fire Brigade:
  - Risk information was out of date (up to ten years in some cases) or unavailable to attending crews
  - Attending officers had not received training in and were unaware of the dangers presented by combustible cladding
- 2.3. Failures in communication between the control room and fire ground and command and control systems:
  - The inability to handle large numbers of fire survival guidance calls
  - The continued reliance on stay put strategy
  - Failure or unavailability of communication during the incident in a number of areas
- 2.4. Following the publication of the Grenfell Tower Enquiry Phase 1 report, the Service reviewed the recommendations and completed a high-level gap analysis against the Service’s current position, identifying areas for immediate improvement or in preparation for future legislative or national guidance changes.
- 2.5. These recommendations have been compiled into a formal assurance tracker scrutinised by Risk and Response Governance Board (RRGB). This Board will review progress monthly and has a nominated lead officer (Group Manager for Risk) assigned to oversee the implementation across multiple service areas.

2.6. Overall there were 44 recommendations which can be divided into two main groups:

- National NFCC/Legislative changes; and
- Recommendations/ improvements for all Services and other agencies.

2.7. The Grenfell recommendations are specifically focused on high rise residential buildings. Within Devon & Somerset the Service has:

- No high rise residential buildings over 18M with aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding. The three Devonport Towers in Plymouth have had all cladding removed and are fitted with sprinklers and full evacuation system, deeming them 'low risk' by the National Fire Protection Board
- 172 buildings that apply to the high rise definition (these numbers include residential, student accommodation, hotels and others

2.8. The Service's high rise definition for the purpose operational planning and response shall be defined as a building with 6 or more floors or a building of 18m or more in height (both include the level of fire service access.)

2.9. Current progress is as follows:

	Complete	Due/ongoing	Total
NFCC/Legislative	0	17 Note: Fire Safety Order consultation Due to start W/c 21/07/2020 completed by November 2020 Building Safety Bill Expected to become law in January February 2021	17
Sector wide recommendations (DSFRS)	13	14	27

2.10. All of the sector wide recommendations are planned to be implemented by the Service, with 13 recommendations completed so far in areas such as improved fire-ground communications and availability of risk information. Many of the 14 recommendations not yet complete are highly complex involving upgrading data and systems (such as the Management of Risk Information [MORI] and Operational Risk Information System [ORIS] discussed below) and in collaboration with partners. All recommendations are on the assurance tracker and will be scrutinised on a monthly basis by RRGB.

### **3. HACKETT REVIEW**

3.1. In her *Independent review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety*, Dame Judith Hackett continually pointed towards the need to look at safety in high rise, high risk residential buildings, not in terms of individual elements like a shopping list of improvements, but as complex systems that need a systemic approach to improvement.

“We must also begin thinking about buildings as a system so that we can consider the different layers of protection that may be required to make that building safe on a case-by-case basis.”

3.2. It should be noted that the failures in the regulatory systems governing building regulations that resulted in the Grenfell tragedy and are not just associated with high rise buildings; the risks will almost certainly exist in many other newly built or renovated buildings, the number of which at present is unknown. The risk of buildings not being constructed in compliance with fire safety regulations with new materials has been escalated onto the Service’s Corporate Risk Register and additional measures on how to mitigate this risk are currently being devised.

### **4. ADDITIONAL GRANT FUNDING**

4.1. The Home Office has given all fire and rescue services a grant that is divided between addressing some of the outcomes of Grenfell as well as general improvements in fire safety standards and outcomes. The Service will receive a total grant of £316,909.34, that must be ring-fenced for discharging fire protection duties as well as assuring that all high-rise residential buildings over 18m are reviewed by end of December 2021 with a framework for identification and inspection in place. Returns to the Fire Protection Board will be required and evidence of grant expenditure will be reported on a quarterly basis.

4.2. The portion of the grant that is specifically targeted at high rise buildings is to fund an additional post to support the completion of the NFCC Building Risk Review. This will give detailed evidence to central government on the true picture of the built environment for in-scope high rise buildings.

4.3. The Service has a number of options in how best to use this funding to ensure that risk is reduced to the public such as:

- improved technology;
- digital platforms;
- upskilling operational staff; and
- increasing protection resource and other areas.

An action plan will be implemented and monitored using the established tracker.

4.4. It is likely that a future HMICFRS inspection will focus on the Service response to Grenfell including the surge funding. Consequently, it is proposed that the quarterly returns to the Home Office for the Building Risk Review Grant be presented for discussion at future meetings to provide oversight of the Service response.

4.5. To address the comments by Dame Judith Hackett (above), a proportion of this grant will be used to establish a multi-disciplinary, ‘High-Rise and High-Risk buildings’ team that will treat risk holistically, addressing all aspects of:

- Building design and fire safety/ engineered solutions
- Compliance with fire safety legislation.

- Occupancy and behavioural factors to take into account social, economic and cultural differences.
- Engagement with residents groups
- Engagement with and education of management committees and responsible persons
- Risk information and equipment provided for fire-fighting such as lifts, access routes, Hydrants, signage and communications
- Ensuring mobilizing arrangements, training and operational procedures are consistent
- Collaborative approaches with other agencies to address current legislative and enforcement boundaries
- Specialist fire engineering and legal advice where necessary.

## **5. PROGRESS ON OTHER KEY IMPROVEMENTS**

- 5.1. The Management of Risk Information (MORI) project integrates risk captured in all areas into a single, accessible system. The underlying data architecture upgrades will fully support this approach and support Grenfell recommendations. In addition, the Protection and Operational Risk Information System (ORIS) apps currently being built use a common risk base so that risk information is captured holistically. Expected delivery is likely to be around April 2021 (delayed due to Covid-19).
- 5.2. To further address comments by Dame Judith Hackett and to increase the holistic understanding of risk across the communities of Devon & Somerset, the Prevention, Protection and Operational Risk teams have been merged to form the 'Community Risk Team' which will have a focus on increased community engagement to better understand risk to ensure better outcomes.

**ACFO JOE HASSELL**  
**Director of Service delivery**